

The Silent Bird Wept

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"THE SILENT BIRD WEPT" A Strangers In Paradise fan fiction story by Ami E. Bowen. Strangers in Paradise by Terry Moore. Only The Good Die Young by Billy Joel.

The days had begun to drift, one into the other, like an endless seam on a tattered pair of jeans. Familiar. Comfortable. Yet falling slowly apart as time wears on. Like my mind, She thought, shoving a lock of pale blonde hair from her face with a listless gesture, Why can't I remember yesterday?

Why can't I remember...anything...

The walls of her room were as white as milk, unadorned and the one window facing the bed she sat upon spilled faint light from a cloud hidden sun across the room. She stared at her reflection in the mirror above the counter across from her bed. Stared at her pallid complexion, hollow sunken blue eyes, lifeless hair hanging in lank strands across her face, down her back and over her narrow, bent shoulders.

What am I doing here? The thought came to her, as it had for several days...weeks...years?...unbidden, harsh, and confusing. She shook her head and tried to will her mind past the foggy mist which seemed to envelope it ever since....

Why? Why can't I remember anything? What am I doing here?

She felt as if she should cry. Her chest hurt and her hands were fists clenched at her sides, but her eyes stayed dry. It was as if she had cried, long ago, and now no more tears would come.

She turned her head slightly as the door to her room creaked open,

keeping her eyes lowered. White shoes. The hem of a bleached dress. The sound of footfalls on the tiled floor as the shoes came closer.

"Shall we get started today, Katina?" The voice was soft, nearly a whisper, and she had to strain to hear it. She allowed her gaze to travel up the shoes, past the hem, along the woman's full hips, stomach and pushing bust, at last to rest upon her puffy, tanned face and sorrowfully kind brown eyes.

Brown....eyes....

Her gaze lingered for a while on the woman's eyes. A shred of memory...so faint it may as well have been a long forgotten dream...struggled within her brain.

"Are you ready, my dear?" The woman asked again, and Katina stared at the woman's right breast, where a name tag had been pinned. She read it and said the woman's name aloud, slowly, as if forming the words in her mouth, with her tongue, was painful.

"Agnes."

"Very good, Katina." Agnes beamed, "That's very good indeed. Did you remember me, or did you just read my tag?"

Confused, Katina stared. Who is this person? What does she want from me? Why can't she just leave me alone? Why can't they all just leave me alone!?

Agnes sighed and held a hand out, motioning for Katina to take it and stand up. As she reached for the woman's hand, Katina noticed an odd bracelet on her wrist, made of paper and covered over which a thin plastic. She let go of the woman's hand when she had gained her footing and began to fiddle with the bracelet, spinning it around and around her wrist.

"Don't play with that, Katina." Agnes said, slapping Katina's hand away from her wrist, "Come with me, now. We don't want to keep Dr. Staneck waiting."

Mindlessly, like a disconcerted child, she followed. As they walked swiftly down hallways and past rooms whose doors stood ajar, past people who stared as inanimately as the dead, or screamed and clawed at unseen specters, she wondered again where she was and how she had come to be here.

She noticed other women dressed like Agnes, with name tags attached to their right breasts and men as well, dressed in white pants and shirts. So much white. So bright. The overhead lights flickered across the hall, casting everyone who came beneath them into a sickly hue.

At last they turned a corner and enter a room with a single, unnaturally thin bed, a metal table with a drawer built into it, and an adjustable lamp attached to the headboard of the bed. As her eyes wandered across the room, Katina noticed the sink near the back of the room, with the cupboards filled with what looked like gauze and rubber gloves.

Agnes walked behind her and gave her gentle shove towards the bed. Katina looked back at her in surprise.

"Do come in, Katina." A man stood in the shadows of the room, near the corner, smoke from a cigar pooled around his head and hid his features from her, "Don't be shy."

"Agnes..?" Katina asked, uncertain, afraid to allow the woman to leave. Something about the man unnerved her.

"It's quite all right, Katina." Agnes said, patting her shoulder lightly, "You know this is Doctor Staneck...he's been helping you, dear."

"There's nothing to worry about, Katina." He said, "You may go, now, Agnes."

"But, sir..." Agnes said, as Katina's fingers wrapped around her wrist, digging her nails into her flesh, "She's...so frightened..."

"Now. Please. Agnes." He smiled, hiding his annoyance, "Come here, Katina. We have a lot of ground to cover and I don't intend to waste time lingering in the doorway. You remember what to do?"

"Why...?" Katina asked slowly, letting go of Agnes' wrist. She walked into the room and stood facing the doctor. Her chin came up to his chest and she had to lift her head to look at his face. The smoke from the cigar did not bother her. She breathed in the dirty air and gazed up into his gray eyes expectantly.

"Why do you think, Katina." He said, blowing smoke in her face, chuckling softly almost to himself.

She narrowed her eyes, a flash of images danced through her mind. Water. Metal. Pain. A woman's face dripping with blood, screaming, large brown eyes wide with...fear? She cringed inwardly and the pictures ceased.

She was vaguely aware of the man...the doctor...placing his large hands across her shoulders and turning her around, to face the bed. He whispered something into her ear and she reached up to the buttons along her shirt, began to unfasten the top one. He smiled and her hands trembled.

"Good girl." He said, licking his thick lips, "You remember how this works...your therapy is going very well....very well indeed."

She reached the last button and slipped the shirt off her shoulders, down her back and heard it fall slowly towards the floor. She turned to face him and he nodded, his eyes glassy as he stared at her. She felt ashamed all of a sudden and tried to cover he exposed breasts, which burned beneath his gaze.

"Katina..." He said, his voice low and growling, piercing the silence, "You know what to do...do it...Katina."

She whimpered and turned away from him, something whispering to her that this wasn't right. This wasn't right at all. She bent down and picked up her shirt. Another flash of memory....a sharpness in her

arm...hands gliding along her skin, hot, burning wetness between her thighs...pain...so much pain and fear...

"What are you doing, Katina?" He asked, gently, calmly, though anger hid beneath the surface, "Take off your clothes...all of them, Katina."

She slipped her shirt back on amid flashed of images...dreams...memories? Tears choked her as she struggled with the buttoned.

"Katina!" He shouted, grabbing her and spinning her about to face him, "What are you doing?! What are you doing, you stupid bitch!?"

"NO!" She screamed. Car...skidding out of control...her hands on the wheel, slipping...a woman screaming in the seat beside her... She reached out and punched his face hard, turned to run away.

"Come here!" He raced after her, grabbed her again and slapped her hard across the face. Her hand went to her stinging cheek as she reeled. "Don't you ever run from me again, you little whore!"

"No!" She cried, anger narrowing her eyes to slits of icy fire, "It was you!" She twisted in his grip, trying to free herself, "You...made...me forget...!"

The needle.

"I was trying to help you, Katina!" He said, holding her firmly against him, pulling her body into his own, "By making you forget what had happened!"

Oh..god! Straps across her legs, arms...binding her, holding her down...she couldn't move. Her mind foggy, unable to focus on anything...

The sharpness....a needle...in her arm.

"You bastard!" She cried, sobbing...as her mind began to fill with pictures...images...like bits and pieces of a movie... "How could you?!"

She screamed, her eyes wide, seeing nothing but inner visions...a tidal wave of images weaving themselves together to paint a chaotic, yet slowly familiar painting. Her mind raged, as her body fell limp, exhausted all of a sudden...she hadn't even felt it this time...as she saw the doctor nod towards the nurse who stood with an spent syringe in her hand, shaking her head sadly at Katina...the doctor lifting her up...carrying her to the bed...her arms and legs being fastened tight around with straps...impossible to move...to get away...so tired...so....the visions just kept coming...and coming....

"...Francine?" She called, the hairbrush stuck in her long, blonde hair, her shirt half on, half off, "Are you coming, or not?"

"Yeah, keep your shirt on, Katchoo!" Francine, the dark haired woman with the intense dark brown eyes answered from the bedroom, "I just can't decided what to wear...should I go for the navy dress suit or

the black skirt and red sweater? Katchoo! help!"

Laughing, Katina drew the hairbrush down her hair, reached for a ponytail holder and tied it around her hair in a top-tail which hung from the top of her head and dripped tendrils into her eyes. She pulled her black shirt on and buttoned it halfway up, so that the white tank-shirt beneath was visible. She stepped out of the small bathroom she shared with her best friend and love and joined her in the bedroom. Arms folded across her chest, she regarded Francine with silent mirth, "Look at you." She drawled, in her lazy, select way, her blue eyes twinkling, "You can't even get dressed without me...what would you do without me, Francie?"

"Oh, hush and help me pick out something to wear, all ready." Francine threw a pillow at Katina, "We're gonna be late for David's poetry reading."

"The skirt and sweater, Francie." Katina said, and watched her friend stride across the room, clad only in a black lace bra and matching panties. She licked her lips and felt an almost painful throbbing near the center of her body. She wanted Francine, had always wanted her. She loved her.

As they were heading out the door, Katina turned to Francine and took her face between her hands, drawing her down...down...

"You know why I love you so much, Francie?" She gasped, running her tongue across the woman's mouth, "I don't know...I just do."

Francine sighed and whispered against Katina's mouth, tasting her skin that was like salty candy, "Katchoo...we...better go now..."

"Yes..." Katina said, backing away and opening the door, walking down the stairs towards the sidewalk and the waiting car, towards the darkness of the midsummer night, Francine following behind, "Let's go."

It had begun to rain. Not hard at first, soft, like a cloud had just died and the rain was pieces of it's soul dripping softly down to earth. It grew harder as Katina drove them down the winding city streets, streaking the windshield and pattering out a kind of music on the hood and roof of the car. Laughing, Katina reached to turn on the radio. They swayed and sang along to an old rock song...one of Francine's favorites...

"...Come out Virginia...don't let me wait...you catholic girls start way to late..."

They didn't see the truck as it pulled out in front of them, they didn't see the light flashing red...

"...they showed you a statue...told you to pray...built you a temple and locked you away..."

Francine screamed as she saw the headlights of the truck...heard the deafening roar of the horn....screech of tires....

"...but they never told you the price that you'd pay..."

Katina struggled to turn the car, the wheel wouldn't obey her command...it was stuck! The lights...growing brighter...the sound of Francine screaming, clutching at her arm with hands like vices....That song on the radio...louder than the thudding of her heart, her breath coming out in gasps...and the truck...on top of them....shattered glass...something wet in her eye...blood?...Pain...so much pain as if her body were on fire...and the world...spinning...spinning...

"..Only the good die young...only the good...."

The radio abruptly shut off. Katina was enveloped by a darkness more terrifying than death...for she knew...somewhere inside...that she would wake up again to relive this horror...over and over and over....

She was sobbing. Silently, fully. Sobbing as her mind fought it's way past the drugs, to the present. She felt hands on her, sliding down her body, caressing the fullness of her breasts, fingers dipping between her thighs. She opened her eyes in horror...in shock at what was happening. Flung like a dishrag from one nightmare into another.

Why can't they just leave me alone!?

She saw the doctor's face, eyes so full of scalding lust, a moment before he dipped his head downward. His tongue licked the crevice between her breasts, she struggled against her bonds, unable to fight him. Unable to save herself. She wanted to hurt him...she wanted to make him suffer...

Ohgodohgodohgod...no...no! Please don't let this happen...please...

"Good girl, Katina...such a good girl..." And the doctor's voice...so horrible...so...and she felt his hardness pressing against her thigh, hurting her...as she breathed in his stale breath, trying to scream...her mouth covered suddenly by his hands... "Shhh...don't scream...Katina...my good little girl....you don't want to disturb the other patients...shhh..."

"No! Stop it, you son of a bitch!" She bit his hand, hard, her eyes flashing dangerously as he leaped off her, his pants down around his ankles, his manhood still rigid and awaiting further activity, "I'll kill you! I swear to god, I'll make you wish you'd never lived to touch me!"

"...Katina..." He said, "Is that any way to treat your doctor....who's been trying, all this time, to help you...this is part of...your therapy..."

Suddenly the door swung open and Katina gasped, tears in her eyes once more.

Oh please god don't let her see this...don't let see me like this...oh please god....

She turned her head in shame...in anger...in frustration.

The doctor turned to the woman standing in the doorway. He didn't have time to pull up his pants, to cover himself and his actions up with lies. The woman's brown eyes held that knowledge as well as she strode towards the bed and undid the binds which held Katina Choovanski tightly down and helpless.

"Oh, Katchoo..." Francine sobbed, holding her friend to her, "What happened? What did they do to you? After the accident...after I was released from the hospital, I searched everywhere for you...but no one would tell me where you were...this was the last place I would ever have thought of looking..."

"Francie?" Katina said, over and over...like a plea, a prayer, "Francie..."

"Shhh...honey, don't." Francine said, stroking her friend's hair, "It's all right now...everything's going to be all right."

"He...he touched me, Francie!" Katina cried, shoving her friend away, "I want to make him hurt...like he hurt me...let me make him hurt."

The doctor had pulled his pants back up and stood near the door, watching in horror, realizing his time would come...soon...

"No, Katchoo..." Francine grabbed her friend's arm and pulled her back, away from the doctor, "Put your clothes on. We're getting out of here."

"But...Francine!" Katchoo cried, "Don't you understand? Don't you care what he did to me? He raped me! Over and over...drugged me, bound me to that table and raped me!"

Francine cringed, hurting so deeply inside of herself for her friend that if she let herself stop and think about it, she'd go mad...she couldn't handle it...she wasn't strong like Katchoo...

"I know, Katchoo..." She said, "And he will hurt. Trust me. I'll make sure of it. But not here. Not now. This isn't the time. Later...when he least expects it...he'll wish he'd died in this room...today."

Reluctantly, Katina nodded...realizing the wisdom of Francine's words, and soundlessly donned her clothes. When she was dressed, she allowed Francine to guide her out of the room...down the hall, past the dead-eyed people...nurses in white...towards the front desk where papers were signed and good-byes hollowly exchanged...Agnes sadly shook her head as they walked past...she whispered to Katina, yet Francine heard....

"I tried to stop him, Katina." She said, "I tried."

Katina nodded, knowing the nurse was honest. She really did try to stop him...but she was afraid of him as well...afraid of losing her job.

At last they reached the outside, where David stood waiting near a cab, arms down at his sides, his glasses off as he rubbed wearily at the space between his eyes with his thumb and forefinger. He looked up as he saw them approach.

Katina allowed herself to be enfolded in their arms, allowed herself to cry...to feel the love for these two people...her best friends...wrap itself around her and drive out all the demons...to be dealt with another day. As all demons had to be dealt with. Sooner or later.

~End~

End
file.